

Zuzana Minacova With Her Mother Pavla Severova



This is a photo of me as a baby with my mother in our apartment in Bratislava. It was taken in the early 1930s. My mother, Pavla Silbersteinova, née Löwyova, was born in 1898 in Nitra, and was the ninth of eleven children. She apparently attended Jewish elementary school, but as an adult, in her marriage, she didn't keep Jewish customs. My mother was the first girl in Nitra to graduate from high school. She couldn't even attend school, but studied privately at home, and then took the

exams. Then she went to study medicine, which in those days was absolutely exceptional, for a woman to go study like this. She became a doctor. I don't know where, or how my parents actually met, but I think that probably in medical circles, as both my father and mother were doctors. Both my parents were Jews, but the religious side of things wasn't observed much in our family. We already lived in a non-religious way. We lived in Bratislava on Stefanikova Street, in a beautiful five-room apartment. My sister and I had a Christian nanny. Our father was a well-known doctor, and had his practice in the same building. When the harassment and persecution of Jews began, I was small, but I remember that my father had to have a sign at his practice where it was written that he was a Jew. We also had to wear a yellow star sewed to our clothing.